



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Academic Regulations Disabled Students

Section 7

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Section 7

Disabled Students

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Section 7: Disabled Students

7.1 Purpose

The purpose of these regulations is to outline our duty under the Equality Act (2010) to anticipate the needs of disabled students and the way in which our university manages and implements individual reasonable adjustments.

7.2 General Principles: Disabled Students

Leeds Beckett strives to apply the Social Model of Disability and make all of its provision as inclusive and accessible as possible for all. However, in order to ensure that individual adjustments are put in place, we recognise a “disabled student” as any student who has a diagnosed disability or long-term condition as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

All recommendations for individual reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis, where appropriate. Recommendations for individual reasonable adjustments shall not reasonably be refused. All students requiring individual reasonable adjustments must declare and provide evidence of their disability to the University via the Disability Advice team.

The University, via the Disability Advice team, will consider the student’s support requirements and provide any recommendations for reasonable adjustments, including reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment, as appropriate.

A disabled student shall not be permitted to seek reasonable adjustment retrospectively, i.e. after submission or assessment. Where it has not been possible to implement recommended individual reasonable adjustments in adequate time prior to submission / assessment disabled students should consider requesting an extension under the ‘Fit to Sit’ principle of Academic Regulations Section 8: Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation .

Deans of School are accountable for ensuring the implementation of recommendations made by the Disability Advice team, although they may delegate operational responsibility for this to a nominated member of their team.

Any information relating to a student’s disability will be treated confidentially and only shared with the student’s consent.

7.3 Code of Practice: Disabled Students

7.3.1 Disabled Student

A “disabled student” is any student who has a diagnosed disability or impairment as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act defines a person as having a disability where:

- a) they have a physical or mental impairment
- b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities.

In the context of higher education, ‘normal day-to-day activities’ includes reading, writing and other essential activities involved in studying at this level.

7.3.2 Declaration of Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, once a student has declared a disability, the University is deemed to have been notified of it and has a legal duty to anticipate the needs of the student and to make reasonable adjustments. This may include students who:

- a) Have a disability or long-term condition at the point of application
- b) Become disabled after starting their course
- c) Become aware of a need for support arising from an existing disability

Upon enrolment, or at any point thereafter, where a student declares or confirms a disability, the existence and general type of disability will be shared with the course team to enable them to anticipate any baseline requirements. The Disability Advice team will develop an individual reasonable adjustment plan, in conjunction with the student, specific to their particular needs or condition, to enable them to fully participate in all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.

7.3.3 Reasonable Adjustments for Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Reasonable adjustments for learning, teaching and assessment enable disabled students to participate fully in their course(s), ensuring they are not disadvantaged as a result of their disability.

On receipt of evidence, the designated Disability Adviser will discuss with the student and a member of the course team, reasonable adjustments for learning, teaching and assessment. The agreed reasonable adjustments will then be formally documented and communicated to the course team, as well as other relevant services.

7.3.4 Reasonable Adjustments

The designated Disability Advisers will draw on their professional experience, sector knowledge and relevant codes of practice in assessing how a student's disability or long-term condition may impact on their participation in their chosen course, in order to determine the appropriate reasonable adjustments.

In line with the 'Fit to Sit' principle defined in Section 8 of the Academic Regulations for Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation, reasonable adjustments cannot be applied retrospectively, i.e. after submission or assessment.

7.3.5 Assessment

"Assessment" shall be taken to mean any form of assessment as defined in Academic Regulations Section 3, and shall include all formal and informal assessments.

7.3.6 Academic Rigour

Recommendations for reasonable adjustments should not compromise the learning outcomes, core competency standards of the course and any relevant professional body requirements. The Disability Adviser and course team will work in partnership to achieve this.

7.3.7 Responsibilities of Disabled Students

a) Declaration

In order to access individual reasonable adjustments, students must declare their disability to the University and engage with the Disability Advice Team.

b) Timescales

Requests for reasonable adjustments for formal examinations must be made within timescales specified by the University. These are published at the beginning of each academic year.

c) Evidence

It is the responsibility of the student to provide appropriate evidence of their disability or long term condition (e.g. an educational psychologist's assessment; written evidence from a relevant professional).

7.3.8 Responsibilities of Disability Advice

a) Post Declaration

Following declaration by the student, the Disability Advice team will contact students and invite them to engage with the service.

b) Evidence

Upon receipt of appropriate evidence, the Disability Advice Team will invite students to discuss the impact of their disability in relation to their chosen course of study with a Disability Adviser so that appropriate reasonable adjustments can be identified.

c) Communication of reasonable adjustments

Disability Advice will provide the School, other relevant services and the student with:

- a written plan of the reasonable adjustments required
- responsibilities for the implementation of reasonable adjustments
- the opportunity for further discussion with the Disability Adviser

7.3.9 Accountability for ensuring the implementation of reasonable adjustments

The Dean of School is accountable for ensuring reasonable adjustments are implemented. The Dean may nominate a member of their leadership team to take managerial responsibility for ensuring the implementation of adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment.

7.3.10 Implementation of reasonable adjustments

All adjustments identified for students are based upon the professional experience and judgement of the Disability Advisers, as well as their sector knowledge and understanding of relevant codes of practice. Where the Course Director has a concern about the implementation of reasonable adjustments, they should discuss this with the Dean and the designated Disability Adviser.

7.3.11 Confirming the implementation of reasonable adjustments

The Dean or nominee will confirm to the student and to the designated Disability Adviser that the adjustments will be implemented.

7.3.12 Assessment after the Event

Timed and formal assessment

Where students would be disadvantaged by a particular form of assessment, reasonable adjustments to the assessment method or, where necessary, alternative assessment methods may be required. In these instances, recommendations for reasonable adjustments will be made with due consideration given to core competencies and professional body requirements. Where an alternative method of assessment is required, this will be discussed between the designated Disability Adviser, the course team and the student to agree an appropriate alternative.

The University will specify a deadline by which all exam adjustments must be requested in order to guarantee that adjustments can be implemented. The required reasonable adjustments must be shared with the course team prior to this deadline. After this deadline, if the adjustments cannot be made, students should follow the University's procedures for extenuating circumstances and mitigation.

Mitigation and Extenuating Circumstances

Precluded Requests

Provided that the agreed reasonable adjustment arrangements have been fully implemented:

- a) A student shall not normally be permitted to request further extenuating circumstances to be taken into account where these relate to the disability for which these arrangements were made.

Non-precluded Requests

Circumstances in which a request for consideration of extenuating circumstances to be taken into account are permitted where:

- a) any mode of assessment is not covered by an alternative arrangement
- b) the agreed method of assessment or arrangements for assessment have not been fully implemented
- c) the student's disability is fluctuating in nature, and therefore unpredictable, and their circumstances and support requirements may change during the course of an assessment.

Temporary illness or injury

Students may require support due to a sudden illness or injury, which does not fall within the remit of Disability Advice. Where a School feels it is reasonable to provide support for a student with a temporary disability (for example, exam support such as extra time, word processor or scribe, etc.), responsibility for organising and funding the support lies with the School, although the Disability Advice team is able to offer guidance. The process for this is:

- a) Student provides evidence of a temporary illness or injury
- b) The course team meets with the student and agrees what adjustments are reasonable and practicable
- c) If appropriate, the Temporary Illness/Injury Exam Adjustment Plan is completed within the School and sent to Timetabling so that arrangements can be made
- d) If it is not practicable to make the required adjustments students should be advised of this and supported to apply for mitigation so that they can sit the assessment at a later date

Confidentiality and Consent

When a student declares their disability, 'standard/baseline' recommendations will be shared with the course team.

Any information relating to a student's disability will be treated confidentially. Diagnostic evidence provided to Disability Advice will never be shared with third parties without explicit consent from the disabled student.

Disability Advice will request consent from disabled students prior to sharing information regarding their disability and agreed individual reasonable adjustments.